(a) whether it is a fact that there is a huge difference between the consumer's and producer's sale price of agricultural products;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the amount of this difference in respect of flour, gram, edible oil, black gram, rice, etc.; and

(c) whether Government has made any plan to narrow this difference by undertaking any study and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The difference between producer's (wholesale) and consumer's (retail) prices of agricultural products range between Rs. 0.50 to Rs. 9.50 per kg only in the metropolitan cities as given in table below:

(Rs. per kg)

Commodity / Centre	Consumer's Price 14.11.07	Producer's Price 14.11.07	Variation	Commodity / Centre	Consumer's Price 14.11.07	Producer's Price 14.11.07	Variation
Rice				Groundnut Oil			
Chennai	14.00	12.00	**2.00**	Chennai	70.00	60.50	**9.50**
Delhi	16.00	13.90	**2.10**	Delhi	120.00	113.55	**6.45**
Kolkata	13.00	12.00	**1.00**	Kolkata	86.00	83.50	**2.50**
Mumbai	14.25	12.75	**1.50**	Mumbai	95.00	90.00	**5.00**
Wheat				Mustard Oil			
Chennai	16.00	15.50	**0.50**	Chennai	NT	NT	—
Delhi	12.00	10.30	**1.70**	Delhi	64.00	57.50	**6.50**
Kolkata	NT			Kolkata	60.00	57.50	**2.50**
Mumbai	14.50	12.75	**1.75**	Mumbai	64.00	62.66	**1.34**
Gram				Black Gram			
Chennai	36.00	32.80	**3.20**	Chennai	42.00	40.00	**2.00**
Delhi	35.00	30.25	**4.75**	Delhi	37.00	29.90	**7.50**
Kolkata	32.00	30.00	**2.00**	Kolkata	36.00	30.00	**6.00**
Mumbai	34.00	33.00	**1.00**	Mumbai	46.00	42.00	**4.00**
Atta							
Chennai	18.00	17.00	**1.00**				
Delhi	13.00	11.65	**1.35**				
Kolkata	14.00	12.20	**1.80**				
Mumbai	15.50	14.00	**1.50**				

Source : State Civil Supplies Departments. NR—Not Reported. NT—Not Traded

(c) Does not arise.

Criteria for MRP

†1216. SHRI MAHENDRA SAHNI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any criteria has been laid down for determining Maximum Retails Price (MRP) indicated by the company;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, whether Government is contemplating to take any concrete steps in this regard; and

(d) whether Government is aware that several small manufacturers print MRP 20 to 25 times more than the cost?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) to (c) As per the provisions contained in the Standards of Weights and Measures (Packaged Commodites) Rules, 1977, the manufacturer/importer of a pre-packed commodity is to ensure that the package contains, *inter-alia,* declaration of retail sale price in the form "Maximum Retail Price" (MRP), which shall be inclusive of all taxes. This is normally done by the company on the basis of calculation of cost and market factors. No guidelines have been prescribed by the Government for determining the MRP by the company.

(d) No such complaints have come to the Department.

Recommendations of Abhijit Sen Committee

1217. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Abhijit Sen Committee has recommended to reintroduce the universal PDS with uniform central issue price; and

(b) if so, the actions being taken by Government to implement the recommendation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) This recommendation was not agreed to since the Targeted PDS was introduced in June, 1997 with a view to aim at the underprivileged sections of the society, as the earlier Universal PDS did not adequately focus on the hungry and had urban bias. The introduction of universal PDS may result in the PDS losing its focus on meeting the needs of the poor.

Diversion of Foodgrains

1218. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the current stock of foodgrains available with Government;

(b) whether it is a fact that there has been large scale diversion of foodgrains meant for PDS, as indicated by a panel set up by his Ministry;

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard and the reasons for the deiversion of foodgrains;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the country spends over 10000 crores for PDS; and

(e) if so, whether Government has given a thought for overhauling PDS and, if so, with what result?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) The stock of foodgrains (rice & wheat) as on 1.11.2007 is as under:—